



Initial Institutional Approval Requirements

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

October 2015

Contents

Introduction	3
Stage I – Prerequisites.....	5
Prerequisite 1.....	5
Prerequisite 2.....	5
Stage II – Eligibility Requirements.....	6
Criterion 1	6
Criterion 2	6
Criterion 3	6
Criterion 4	7
Criterion 5	7
Criterion 6	7
Criterion 7	8
Criterion 8	8
Criterion 9	8
Criterion 10	9
Criterion 11	9
Criterion 12	9
Stage III – Alignment with all Applicable Standards and Preconditions	10
Stage IV - Provisional Approval	10
Stage V - Full Approval	10

Introduction

California law provides the Commission on Teacher Credentialing with the authority to accredit institutions and approve all programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California's public schools. Among other responsibilities, Education Code Section 44372(c) sets forth the Commission's responsibility to rule on the eligibility of an applicant for initial accreditation for the purpose of offering a program of educator preparation.

As a result, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing requires that an institution seeking to offer new educator preparation program(s) must first be approved for initial accreditation as a new program sponsor and must do so by completing the Commission's *Initial Institution Approval (IIA)* process. The process includes five stages including: Stage I – Prerequisites, Stage II – Eligibility Requirements, Stage III – Alignment with All Applicable Standards and Preconditions, Stage IV – Provisional Approval and finally, Stage V – Full Approval. All stages must be successfully completed. All documentation submitted during the five stages will be fully reviewed and considered for approval by the Commission.

If an institution successfully completes Stages I through III and receives Provisional Approval at Stage IV, it will be required to adhere to all expectations and responsibilities of an approved program sponsor including but not limited to applicable program standards, reporting requirements, annual accreditation fees, credential recommendation and student record responsibilities and all requirements of the seven year Accreditation cycle. After an institution completes 2-3 years on Provisional Approval and participates in a focused site visit, the Commission will determine if the institution is eligible for Full Approval.

The following pages provide the details for each stage that must be completed. Forms and submission information can be found on the [Initial Institutional Approval webpage](#). Questions must be emailed to IIA@ctc.ca.gov.

Stage I – Prerequisites

Prerequisite 1

Regional Accreditation and Academic Credit

Institutions interested in seeking Initial Institutional Approval must identify which of the following applies to their institution. To be indicated when registering for Accreditation 101 (See Prerequisite 2).

1. The institution is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another of the six regional accrediting associations. A copy of a letter from the accrediting association must be hyperlinked as verification.
2. The institution is a public school, school district or county office and has received approval of sponsorship from the agency's governing board. Verification must be submitted in the form of a letter or board minutes signed by the superintendent or CEO of the agency.
3. The institution is neither of the above and is preparing to offer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs pursuant to SBX5 1 (Chap. 2, Stats. of 2010). Additional requirements are necessary for institutions applying under this category

Prerequisite 2

Accreditation 101 - Expectations and Responsibilities for Commission Approved Institutions

Prior to accepting an application for initial institutional approval, the Commission requires that the institution send a team to Accreditation 101, a professional training that provides information regarding eligibility and outlines the expectations and responsibilities of Commission approved program sponsors including reporting requirements, applicable program standards, annual accreditation fees, credential recommendation and student record responsibilities, and other expectations for Commission approved institutions that sponsor educator preparation in California. Registration: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/elig-inst-accred-101.html>

Required attendees include:

- Unit head
- Fiscal Officer
- Directors of Proposed Program(s)
- Partner Employing Organization or educational entity
- Other participants deemed necessary by the institution

All fees for attending Accreditation 101 are borne by the institution.

Stage II – Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements will be brought before the Commission for consideration and a determination of approval or denial. A finding of approval will allow an institution to move forward to Stage III of the Initial Institutional Process.

<p style="text-align: center;">Criterion 1 Responsibility and Authority</p> <p>Institutions seeking Initial Institutional Approval must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Identify the position within the organizational structure that is responsible for ongoing oversight of all educator preparation programs offered by the entity including educator preparation programs offered by extension divisions.b) Identify the individual who will coordinate each educator preparation program sponsored by the entity. Provide a description of the reporting relationship between this person(s) and (a) above. If a reporting relationship is indirect, describe the levels of authority and responsibility for each educator preparation program.c) Provide an organizational chart for the institution as well as the division(s) within the institution responsible for the oversight of educator preparation programs; include any parent organization, outside organization(s), or partner(s) who will be involved in the oversight of the educator preparation unit and/or responsible for program delivery.d) Provide policies to ensure that duties regarding credential recommendations are not delegated to persons other than employees of the Commission approved institution.e) Provide assurance that individuals identified as responsible for credential recommendations will participate in Commission training related to the recommendation process.
<p style="text-align: center;">Criterion 2 Mission and Vision</p> <p>To be granted initial institutional accreditation, an institution must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Provide its mission and vision related to educator preparation.b) Confirm that the mission and vision will be published on the website and in institutional documents provided to candidates.
<p style="text-align: center;">Criterion 3 Lawful Practices</p> <p>To be granted initial institutional accreditation, a program of professional preparation must be proposed and operated by an entity that makes all personnel decisions without unlawful discrimination. The entity must provide written policy as verification that decisions regarding the admission, retention or graduation of students, and all personnel decisions regarding the employment, retention or promotion of employees are made without unlawful discrimination.</p>

Criterion 4

Commission Assurances and Compliance

To be granted Initial Institutional Approval, the initial program proposal must include the following assurances:

- a) That there will be compliance with all preconditions required for the initial program(s) the institution would like to propose (General and program specific preconditions for proposed programs must accompany this document)
- b) Provide assurance that all required reports to the Commission including but not limited to data reports and accreditation documents, will be submitted by the Commission approved entity for all educator preparation programs offered including extension divisions.
- c) That the sponsor will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or a monitoring of the program by a Commission staff member.
- d) That the sponsor will participate fully in the Commission's accreditation system and adhere to submission timelines.
- e) That once a candidate is accepted and enrolled in the educator preparation program, the sponsor must offer the approved program, meeting the adopted standards, until the candidate;
 - i. Completes the program;
 - ii. Withdraws from the program;
 - iii. Is dropped from the program;
 - iv. Is admitted to another approved program to complete the requirements, with minimal disruption, for the authorization in the event the program closes. In this event, an individual transition plan would need to be developed with each candidate.

Criterion 5

Requests for Data

An institution seeking Initial Institutional Approval must identify a qualified officer responsible for reporting and responding to all requests from the Commission within the specified timeframes for data including, but not limited to:

- a) program enrollments
- b) program completers
- c) examination results
- d) state and federal reporting
- e) candidate competence
- f) organizational effectiveness data
- g) other data as indicated by the Commission

Criterion 6

Veracity in all Claims and Documentation Submitted

To be granted Initial Institution Approval, the institutional leadership (Dean or Superintendent) must positively affirm the veracity of all statements and documentation submitted to the Commission. Evidence of a lack of veracity is cause for denial of initial institutional accreditation

Criterion 7
Grievance Process

To be granted Initial Institution Approval, the sponsor must

- a) Provide a clearly delineated grievance process for candidates and applicants.
- b) Demonstrate that information pertaining to the grievance process is accessible to all candidates and applicants.
- c) Provide documentation that candidates have been informed of the grievance process and that the process has been followed.

Criterion 8
Communication and Information

To be granted Initial Institution Approval, the sponsor must provide a plan for communicating and informing the public about the institution and the educator preparation programs. The plan must demonstrate that

- a) The institution will create and maintain a website that includes information about the institution and all approved educator preparation programs. The website must be easily accessible to the public and must not require login information (access codes/password) in order to obtain basic information about the institution's programs and requirements as listed in (b).
- b) The institution will make public information about its mission, governance and administration, admission procedures, and information about all Commission approved educator preparation programs.
- c) Information will be made available through various means of communication including but not limited to website, institutional catalog, and admission material.

Criterion 9
Student Records Management, Access, and Security

To be granted Initial Institution Approval, the sponsor must demonstrate that it will maintain and retain student records. Institutions seeking Initial Institutional Approval will provide verification that

- a) Candidates will have access to and be provided with transcripts and/or other documents for the purpose of verifying academic units and program completion.
- b) All candidate records will be maintained at the main institutional site or central location (paper or digital copies).
- c) Records will be kept securely in locked cabinets or on a secure server located in a room not accessible by the public.

Criterion 10

History of Prior Experience and Effectiveness in Educator Preparation

Institutions seeking Initial Institutional Approval must have sponsored an educator preparation program leading to licensure, or participated as a partner in any educator preparation programs and/or programs focused on K-12 public education and provide history related to that experience. CTC staff reserve the right to conduct Google/Nexus searches regarding the institution, governing board and administration. Institutions must submit:

- a) History related to its prior experience preparing, training and supporting educators within California or in other states.
- b) A list of all states and/or countries in which the institution is currently operating and the status of the institution's approval in each of those locations.
- c) Retention and completion data in educator preparation programs or other programs when educator preparation data are not available.
- d) Proof of third party notification enlisting comments to be sent to: Input@ctc.ca.gov.

Criterion 11

Capacity and Resources

To be granted Initial Institution Approval, an institution must submit a Capacity and Resources plan providing evidence about how it will sustain the educator preparation program(s) through a 2 – 3 year provisional approval (if granted) at a minimum. An institution's Capacity and Resource plan must include:

- a) Copy of the most recent audited budget for the institution.
- b) A proposed operational budget for the educational unit.
- c) Information about instructional and support personnel for the educational unit.
- d) Evidence of K-12 partnerships for the purposes of providing fieldwork.
- e) Information about facilities and/or digital learning platforms.
- f) A plan to teach out candidates if, for some reason, the institution is unable to continue providing educator preparation program(s).

Criterion 12

Disclosure

Institutions must disclose:

- a) Information regarding the proposed delivery model (online, in person, hybrid, etc.)
- b) All locations of the proposed educator preparation programs including satellite campuses.
- c) Any outside organizations (those individuals not formally employed by the institution seeking Initial Institutional Approval) that will be providing any direct educational services as all or part of the proposed programs.

Stage III – Alignment with all Applicable Standards and Preconditions

Once an institution seeking Initial Institutional Approval receives approval for eligibility following Stage II, Eligibility Requirements, the institution may continue in the Initial Institutional Approval process by submitting the following:

1) Common Standards - Common Standards reflect aspects of program quality that are the same for all credential programs, regardless of type of program. The program sponsor must respond to each Common Standard by providing information and supporting documentation that is inclusive of all credential programs to be offered by the institution. An institution's responses are reviewed by Commission staff and must be aligned to the Common Standards before Initial Institutional Approval can be brought before the Commission for consideration.
2) All General and Program Specific Preconditions – Preconditions are statements of Commission policy or state statute. An institution's responses are reviewed and must be in compliance with the general and program specific preconditions before the initial Institutional Approval can be brought before the Commission for consideration.
3) Program Standards Document – A document addressing the specific credential program standards for which the institution seeks to initially offer must be submitted before the institution's application for Initial Institutional Approval is brought to the Commission for consideration.

Stage IV - Provisional Approval

Once an institution has satisfied Stages I, II, and III of the Initial Institutional Approval process, the institution's application will again be brought before the Commission for its consideration and a determination regarding Initial Institutional Approval will be made.

If the Commission approves the new institution, it would be allowed to operate under <i>Provisional Approval</i> . The provisional timeframe will be determined by the Commission and will span 2 to 3 years, in accordance with the program's design. At a minimum of 2 years, this timeframe will be adequate for an initial group of candidates to complete the program thereby allowing for data to be collected to determine the institution's effectiveness in educator preparation. No additional programs will be approved during this period.
--

Stage V - Full Approval

Full Approval will be determined by the Commission based on the following information:

1. Analysis of data collected during the 2-3 year provisional time period.
2. The results of a focused site visit conducted at the conclusion of the Provisional Approval. Any expenses incurred during the focused site visit are the responsibility of the institution seeking permanent status.